



**Testimony by J. Kevin Kinsella
Vice President, Hartford Hospital**

**Before Appropriations Committee
February 20, 2009**

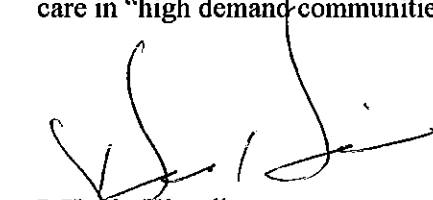
Good evening Senator Harp, Representative Geragosian, and members of the Committee, I am J. Kevin Kinsella, Vice President of Hartford Hospital. I'm here tonight to speak to the planned appropriation of the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services.

One item in the Governor's budget is the proposed closure of Cedarcrest Hospital which would result in an overall net reduction of 40 DMHAS hospital beds and consolidation with Connecticut Valley Hospital (CVH). Given the well documented gridlock in emergency rooms (Hartford Hospital has seen a large increase in both the number of psychiatric patients and overnight stays in the emergency room in the last two years) around the state, and patients that need longer, intermediate stays of 30-90 days, this proposed reduction could further aggravate an already existing problem.

If the Governor's proposal is enacted, I would ask that you set aside some of the net savings of \$3.3 million to ensure adequate access to community hospitals for intermediate care. Last year, the Governor convened the Hospital System Strategic Task Force, co-chaired by Secretary Genuario and Commissioner Vogel to address this gridlock. I was a member of the task force that recommended increasing capacity within "high demand" areas for intermediate care beds.

As my colleague Stephen Larcen, CEO of Natchaug Hospital has testified this recommendation for intermediate care beds will have to be implemented by both DSS and DMHAS. An enhanced rate will need to be established for those selected providers in "high demand" areas that develop intermediate care programs. These intermediate care beds will have to be closely coordinated with community providers to ensure discharge planning and community placement.

I urge you to set-aside \$1.5 million of the savings in Fiscal 2011 to establish needed access to intermediate care in "high demand communities.



J. Kevin Kinsella
Vice President